

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1-20 are pending. Claims 1-2 and 4-20 stand rejected. Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication that claim 3 would be allowed if rewritten in an independent form.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office Action sets forth at page 2, paragraph 3 "Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 12, 13, 17-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Paldus et al (US 6,452,680)."

Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection is overcome by amendments to the claims for the reasons set forth below.

Although applicant disagrees with the overly broad interpretation of Paldus et al., in order to expedite prosecution applicant is amending independent claims 1, 12 and 20 to include the feature of claim 3 deemed allowable in the Office Action. Applicant respectfully requests, therefore, that the rejection of claim 1, 12 and 20 as being anticipated by Paldus et al. be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Additionally, because claims 2, 4-6, 13 and 17-19 ultimately depend upon either allowable claims 1 or 12 these claims are likewise allowable. Applicant respectfully requests therefore that the rejection of claims 2, 4-6, 13 and 17-19 as being anticipated by Paldus et al. be withdrawn and the claims allowed

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action sets forth at page 3, paragraph 4 "Claims 7-9, 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Paldus et al ... in view of Tsuruta et al (US 3,770,354) for claims 8 and 15, and in view of Ostrander et al (US 6,368,560) for claims 9 and 16." Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection is overcome by the amendments to the claims for the reasons set forth below.

As set forth above, independent claims 1, 12 and 20 are presently amended to include the feature deemed allowable in the Office Action. Because claims 7-9 and 15-16 depend upon either allowable claims 1 or 12, these claims are likewise allowable. Applicant respectfully

requests, therefore, that the rejection of claims 7-9 and 15-16 as being unpatentable over Paldus et al. in view of Tsuruta et al. be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

The Office Action sets forth at page 4, paragraph 5 "Claims 10, 11 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Paldus et al ...in view of Wu et al (US 6,040,915)." Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection is overcome because claims 10, 11 and 14 depend upon allowable claims 1 or 12. Applicant respectfully requests, therefore, that the rejection of claims 10, 11 and 14 as being unpatentable over Paldus et al. in view of Wu et al. be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

Applicant has added claim 21 which also recites the feature indicated as allowable in the Office Action. This claim does not add new matter. Applicant respectfully requests that the claim be entered and examined.

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth above, applicant submits that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

RatnerPrestia



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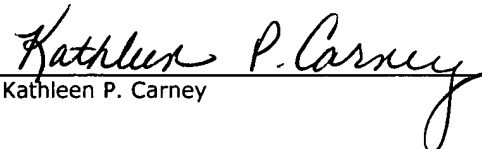
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The Director is hereby authorized to charge or credit Deposit Account No. **18-0350** for any additional fees, or any underpayment or credit for overpayment in connection herewith.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, with sufficient postage, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on May 25, 2006.



Kathleen P. Carney